

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast November 9th 2012

Lessons prepared by Justine Light & Barbara Edmondson

Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Election (noun)	concede (to admit someone's victory)	guarantee
term	victory	supporters
discuss	electoral (adjective)	beating (winning)

1. The American Presidential _____ was watched around the world.
2. Both Obama and Romney had many _____ to help them campaign.
3. There are 538 _____ votes in the United States. These are votes for members of congress. To become president a person must win half of these votes.
4. The position of President of the United States is a four year _____.
5. At the end the person who loses must _____ to the winner.
6. If you are having a problem it helps to _____ it with someone.
7. When the Flames are _____ another team, the Calgary crowd cheers loudly.
8. The winners celebrate their _____ by hugging each other.
9. The contract I will sign will _____ I have a job for a year.

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Obama has won a _____ term in the White House.	a) first b) second
2. In order to win the election a person must have at least _____ electoral votes.	a) 50 percent b) 270
3. In the next four years Obama plans to make changes _____	a) to the health care system. b) to policies with other countries.
4. Obama calls _____ his hometown.	a) Boston b) Chicago
5. Romney called Obama to _____	a) concede. b) show his support.
6. Obama wants to meet with Romney to discuss _____	a) his victory. b) how they can work together.

Discussion Question

Did you watch or read about the American election? Why do you think so many people around the world are interested in the American Presidential elections?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. plea	a) having committed a crime
	2. manslaughter	b) used in a gun
	3. reserve	c) a group of people who work or hang out together and may be associated with criminal activity
	4. bullet	d) people who see a crime committed
	5. guilty	e) killing someone, though not having planned to
	6. sentence	f) when police catch a person who is accused of a crime
	7. gang	g) land given to the First Nations people after white people settled on their land
	8. witnesses	h) hit hard
	9. arrest	i) request or admission
	10. struck	j) punishment given by a court to a criminal

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. How many teens admitted they were guilty of killing Ethan Yellowbird?
2. How old were the teens?
3. How did Ethan Yellowbird die?
4. Where did this incident take place?
5. How will the teens be punished for their crime?
6. Why was this crime different from other crimes on the reserve?
7. The teens were said to have gang ties, what does this mean?

Discussion Question

How can we control gang violence in Alberta? Why do you think many witnesses do not help the police on the Hobbema reserve?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary - Read the definitions below, and then put the sentences in the correct order. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Words and Definitions
sentence – the punishment for a crime, ex: years to be spent in prison
severe – extremely bad
admits – say something is true
frustrated – angry because something is not happening the way you want
release – to give the public news or information
psychiatrist – a doctor who treats people with mental illness

Extra vocabulary to help you understand the story:

remand centre: a place where people charged with a crime wait for their trial, sometimes for many months.

1. received a sentence. four-year The man

2. severe. was very The injury head

3. all night. My he talking son admits was on phone the

4. driving I am snowy roads. on frustrated by the

5. released a about divorce. The government report

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ Julian Thompson received a five-year sentence.
2. ____ He caused the death of his young baby.
3. ____ The family is satisfied with the sentence.
4. ____ The baby hit her head twice.
5. ____ Julian Thompson admits what he did to the baby.
6. ____ Thompson was found guilty of second-degree murder.

Discussion Question: Do you think this person received the right sentence for what he did? How can a parent cope with a screaming baby?

Language Focus

Identifying verb tenses and their use

Forming the present perfect:

has or have + past participle

Present perfect

Meaning

- We use this verb tense to describe an action that happened some time in the past (but no definite time is known.)
- We also use this tense if an event began in the past and still continues today.

Let's look at examples in the news stories:

1. In Obama's victory speech in Chicago he said to his supporters that the election "reminded us that while our road **has been** hard, we **have picked** ourselves up, **we have fought** our way back."

Obama is using the present perfect because there was not just one time in the past where the road was hard, or where they picked themselves up. Obama and his supporters were working for four years for their victory. He is describing actions that occurred at indefinite times in the past.

2. "Their sentences **have** not yet **been** decided."

The present perfect was used for the second reason listed above. The court case began earlier and it still continues today. The judge is still thinking about the sentence.

3. "Hate crime investigators **have** now **charged** a 53-year-old man and a 63-year-old woman with assault and forcible confinement."

In this example the present simple is used to show an event that occurred at a time in the (recent) past, but we do not know when exactly.

Transcripts of Weekly news

	NOVEMBER 9 TH WEEKLY NEWS	TIME
Introduction	Hello, I am Nirmala Naidoo and you are listening to Learning English with CBC news for November 9 th .	0:00
Story 1	President Barack Obama has won a second White House term, beating Republican Mitt Romney. Obama, America's first black president, easily won more than the 270 electoral votes needed for victory on Tuesday. He also won the popular vote 50 per cent to 48. Obama's re-election to another four-year term should guarantee the future of his health care changes. Internationally, the United States is likely to continue working with other countries. Obama told supporters in his hometown of Chicago that the election "reminded us that while our road has been hard, we have picked ourselves up, we have fought our way back." Romney called Obama to concede, and in an appearance before supporters in Boston, he congratulated the president. Obama said he wants to meet with Romney to discuss how they can work together.	0:09
Story 2	Three teens have pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the shooting of a five-year-old boy on a reserve north of Red Deer. Ethan Yellowbird was sleeping in his bed when he was struck in the head with a bullet fired at a house on the Samson Cree First Nation in Hobbema. The teens, who were 13, 16 and 17 at the time, entered guilty pleas in Wetaskiwin. Their sentences have not yet been decided. The reserve had a lot of problems with gang violence for many years before the shooting and police often had trouble getting witnesses to talk about crimes. But in the case of Ethan Yellowbird, people came forward with information which helped the RCMP arrest the teens who they said had gang connections.	1:21
Story 3	The family of an infant killed by her own father is very upset and angry by the sentence he received. On Tuesday, 22-year-old Julian Thomson of Red Deer was sentenced to 5-years in prison in the death of his 4-month-old daughter last year. But because he's already been at the remand centre for 10 months, he will spend just over four years in jail. Zaria McCall died of severe head injuries at Edmonton's Stollery Children's Hospital, on November 26, 2011. Thomson admits to shaking his daughter and says she hit her head three times, twice on her 'Excersaucer', and once when he threw her to the floor. Thomson told a psychiatrist he shook the baby because he was frustrated by her crying. The family of the infant's mother released this statement about the sentence: They say "...We cannot agree with the justice system that five years is an appropriate sentence for anyone, let alone a parent that takes the life of an infant that has no ability to defend themselves." Thomson was originally charged with second-degree murder, but pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of manslaughter on Monday.	2:31

Answer keys

News story 1

1. The American Presidential election was watched around the world.
2. Both Obama and Romney had many supporters to help them campaign.
3. There are 538 electoral votes in the United States. These are votes for members of congress. To become president a person must win half of these votes.
4. The position of President of the United States is a four year term.
5. At the end the person who loses must concede to the winner.
6. If you are having a problem it helps to discuss it with someone.
7. When the Flames are beating another team the Calgary crowd cheers loudly.
8. The winners celebrate their victory by hugging each other.
9. The contract I signed will guarantee I have a job for a year.

Listening

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4. Obama calls _____ his hometown.	a) Boston b) Chicago
5. Romney called Obama to _____	a) concede. b) show his support.
6. Obama wants to meet with Romney to discuss _____	a) his victory. b) how they can work together.

News story 2

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
i	1. plea	a) having committed a crime
e	2. manslaughter	b) used in a gun
g	3. reserve	c) a group of people who work or hang out together and may be associated with criminal activity
b	4. bullet	d) people who see a crime committed
a	5. guilty	e) killing someone, though not having planned to
j	6. sentence	f) when police catch a person who is accused of a crime
c	7. gang	g) land given to the First Nations people after white people

		settled on their land
d	8. witnesses	h) hit hard
f	9. arrest	i) request or admission
g	10. struck	j) punishment given by a court to a criminal

Listening

1. How many teens admitted they were guilty of killing Ethan Yellowbird? *Three*
2. How old were the teens? *They were 13, 16 and 17.*
3. How did Ethan Yellowbird die? *He was hit by a bullet from a gunshot outside of his home while he was sleeping in his bed.*
4. Where did this incident take place? *This happened on the Samson Cree First Nation in Hobbema, a reserve outside of Edmonton.*
5. How will the teens be punished for their crime? *The sentence has not been decided yet.*
6. Why was this crime different from other crimes on the reserve? *Usually witnessed do not come forward on the reserve, but in this case witnesses talked to the police.*
7. The teens were said to have gang ties, what does this mean? *The police believe that the teens belong to a gang or have friends in a gang. Their activities may be related to a gang.*

News story 3

Vocabulary

1. The man received a four-year sentence.
2. The head injury was very severe.
3. My son admits he was talking on the phone all night.
4. I am frustrated by driving on the snowy roads.
5. The government released a report about divorce.

Listening

1. T Julian Thompson received a five-year sentence.
2. T He caused the death of his young baby.
3. F The family is satisfied with the sentence.
4. F The baby hit her head twice.
5. T Julian Thompson admits what he did to the baby.
6. F Thompson was found guilty of second-degree murder.